

H2 MEMORY, HABIT, AND IMITATION

Symbolic recollections are much more than recollections of symbols : they involve the recollection of the object which the symbol denotes, and proceed from the capacity of the memory to link together objects and symbols in correlative pairs. Words are of course the principal symbols in use, and our power of expressing ourselves is entirely dependent upon the tenacity with which a word and the thing or conception which it represents, clings together. Unless the word "rose" is attached to the flower it would be impossible to speak about roses. We know very well how often, with foreign languages, this link between symbol and object becomes broken : we say then, the word fails us. Amongst other symbols are children's toys. Their attractiveness lies entirely in their power of recalling the objects for which they stand. In children, as already observed, the faculty of visualization is exceedingly efficient, and this explains the fact. It is commonly noticed that a child will often prefer a rough toy-symbol of its own to an elaborate purchase at the toy-shop.

A third class of these, so to speak, static recollections are those which enable us to adjust our sensations by correcting them in the light of experience—by means of which we see a round object as a table which is really presented to our eye-sight as an oval. These subconscious recollections enable us to convert

crude impressions into "percepts": lacking the faculty of directive instinct. we should be entirely at sea without them.

The links which bind together a pair of correlatives in the memory—which unite an object with its symbol—~~weaken~~ very greatly in the case of new impressions. as age advances. Adults learn languages with far more difficulty than